

SECRET

Copy No. 192

---

# GEOGRAPHIC INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

CIA/RR GM 60-4  
12 October 1960

*SOUTH VIETNAM*



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS

WARNING

This material contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws, Title 18, USC, Secs. 793 and 794, the transmission or revelation of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

---

SECRET

Although they vary considerably with elevation, temperatures at any one location are relatively uniform throughout the year, ranging from moderate to high. The mean annual temperature in Saigon is about 80°F whereas in Dalat, at an elevation of about 5,000 feet, it is only 65°F.

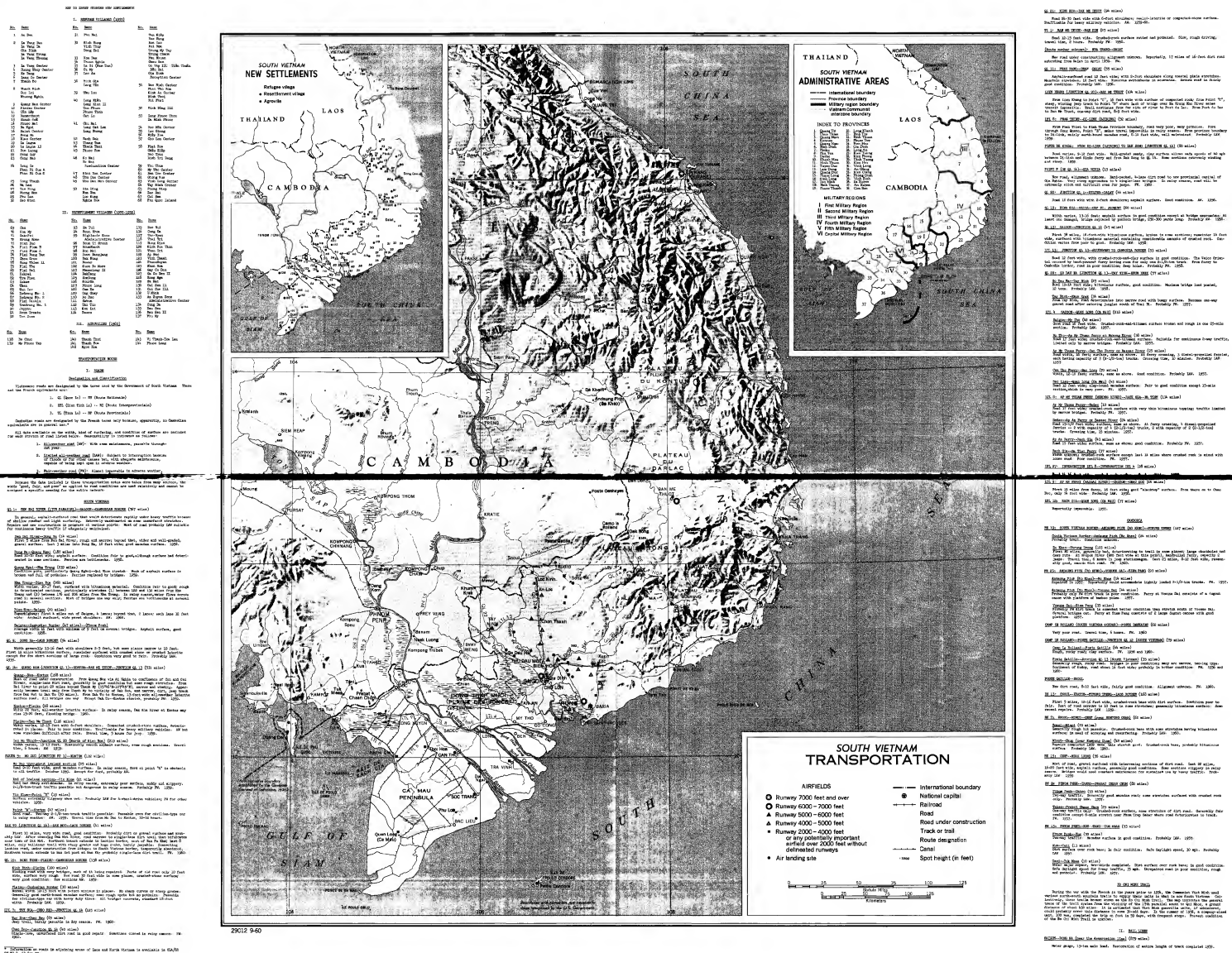


Rainforest is the dominant type of vegetation in the highlands, but open forest consisting of either mixed deciduous trees or pure stands of pine is also

South Vietnam is predominantly an agricultural country. Rice is the major crop, employing almost 7-5 million acres (including double-cropping acreage). Seventy-five percent of the rice comes from the delta area, one of the major "rice bowls" of Southeast Asia. Planting takes place between July and September, and the rice is harvested from the middle of December into February. After the harvest, about 98 percent of the delta, and 90 percent of the highland, rice harvests and the monsoon rains begin. In the coastal lowland the time of the rice harvest varies from the middle of December to the middle of February. The rice harvests and the harvesting period may extend from April through February.

In the highland region, many of the tribes practice primitive "swa" agriculture -- slash-and-burn clearing of wooded areas that are then used for unirrigated cultivation of rice during the rainy season. The rice is harvested somewhat later than in the delta, from the middle of February to the middle of May. Usually rice harvest with other crops such as sweet potatoes and maize. Hunting, fishing, and gathering of forest products such as castor (linumum) bark are

Another source of possible trouble is the large Chinese population, many of whom probably harbor resentment toward the government under Diem because by decree he forced them to assume Vietnamese citizenship and because a government plan for the dissolution of their Congregations (religious associations) is pending. Lastly, components of both the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao sects, whose former areas were defeated by the Army of South Vietnam during the period 1954-56, are infiltrated by the Communists and currently are involved in their guerrilla activities, particularly in the Cambodian border areas, where these sects will



SECRET

STAT

Approved For Release 2002/05/07 : CIA-RDP84-00825R000100340001-8

Next 9 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2002/05/07 : CIA-RDP84-00825R000100340001-8

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Geography Division, ORR

Project Initiation Memorandum

To: Chief, Geographic Research  
From: Chief, Geography Division

Project No. 61.1860

Date: 12 May 1960

1. Subject of Proposed Project: South Vietnam
2. Statement of Problem: The security situation in South Vietnam has deteriorated, with an influx of an estimated 3000 Viet Minh guerrillas and agents into that country. Assassinations of local South Vietnamese officials and acts of sabotage carried on by bands of Communist guerrillas numbering 100-300 men have resulted in a situation in some areas which has been compared to the insecurity prevailing in 1954. This geographic intelligence memorandum will provide an intelligence appreciation of geographic factors relevant to the present situation.

As the situation has similarities to that of Laos in the summer of 1959, it is proposed to use a format somewhat like that of the GM on Laos.

Requester: Self-initiated.

4. Responsible Analyst:

25X1

Kind and Extent of Cooperation Desired:

- a. D/GC to prepare two maps: 1.) One small map to show distribution of ethnic groups and Vietnamese sects. 2.) One large map (terrain shaded) to show "agrovilles" and resettlement sites, roads, main tracks, railways, and seasonally inundated areas.
- b. Other parts of CIA: Information coordination with OCI.
- c. Outside CIA: Check DEI/AMS for latest information on roads.

6. Estimated Man Hours in D/GC: 150

7. Probable Completion Date: July 1960

8. Form of Final Publication: CIA/RR GM 60- *H*

25X1

Approved:

Chief, Geographic Research

Assistant Director, ORR

Chief, Geography Division

*16 May 60*  
Date

*17 May '60*  
Date

13 MAY 1960

25X1

Approved For Release 2002/05/07 : CIA-RDP84-00825R000100340001-8

Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2002/05/07 : CIA-RDP84-00825R000100340001-8